

HIGHLAND MAIN STREET MEETING
Highland Town Hall- Highland, Indiana 46322
June 2, 2016 MINUTES

Call to Order

At 6:34 PM, the Highland Main Street (HMS) meeting was called to order by President Dawn Diamantopoulos at Highland Town Hall, 3333 Ridge Road in Highland, Indiana.

Roll Call:

The following members of the 2016 Highland Main Street Board were present: Dawn Diamantopoulos, Mario DeGeorge, Marion Case, Julie Larson, Marie Russo, Redevelopment Commission Assistant Lance Ryskamp and Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro. Dan Dunn, Tracy Oprea, Alicia Rosignol, and Jen Duncan were absent. Others present included Lee Kause, Lilly Rex, Rhiannon Cizon, and via conference call, Theresa Pecsek.

Minutes:

Minutes from the March 3, 2016, April 7, 2016, and May 5, 2016 meetings were not approved due to the lack of a quorum.

Town Theatre

Cecile Petro presented the May 24, 2016 Update on the Town Theatre that was distributed to the media. It stated that the schematic design phase (Phase I) of the architectural plans was completed and the cost to renovate the theatre is within the \$1.9 to 2.5M range. Two more phases of architectural work are needed before it goes out to bid. At that time, the full cost of the project will be known. The architects envision a completely new auditorium space while maintaining the lobby.

Highland Rookery

Members discussed a ribbon cutting ceremony once the Rookery has a new parking lot and trail up to the levee.

Car Cruise

The Car Cruise Committee stated that they were prepared for the third annual Car Cruise on Saturday, June 4, 2016. Details for the event were discussed. A call list was developed in case there is rain and the cruise has to be rescheduled. Downtown businesses will be contacted by the Committee. Expenditures to date were \$1,911.95, donations totaled \$220.52, and sponsorships were \$3,150. The Committee stated that one more expenditure is expected. Volunteers selling t-shirts include Darlene Barron, Genae Barron, and Mike Barton. Theresa Pecsek has volunteered for providing information and directing traffic. The Committee is composed of Michael Vanes, Chairman, and Lee Kause, Mario DeGeorge, and Jim Kessler. Sponsors included Auto Value Parts Stores (former VanSenus), Blue Top, Thomas Dodge Chrysler Jeep, Service King Collision Repairs Centers, Langel's Inc., Circle Buick GMC, Richardson Sales Service & Powersports, Thomas Kia of Highland, Rauer Plumbing, Inc., and AC Graphix House, Inc. Donations were provided by Brumm's Bloomin Barn and Auto Value Parts.

Façade Improvement Grant

Cecile informed the group that two new façade projects are now completed—8411 and 8836 Kennedy Avenue. Another project has been approved at 8020 Kennedy Avenue.

Christkindlmarket

Members discussed the possibility of providing a Christkindlmarket in 2017. The Car Cruise Committee will contact the Career Center in Hammond about possibly building booths for the event. They will also contact bars downtown for sponsorships.

Municipal Parking Lot on the Corner of Highway and Kennedy Avenues

Members suggested that the Boy & Girl Scouts, Woman's Club, Tri-Kappa should be contacted about assisting with the planting at the Municipal Parking lot. Cecile will contact Public Works Director, John Bach, regarding assistance for tilling and smoothing out the area before planting.

Art & Cultural District Plan

Cecile stated that the Art & Cultural District plan, funded by a grant from NIRPC is almost completed. When approved by the Redevelopment Commission, she will send it out to the members.

Poet Laureate Program

Lilly Rex, Poet Laureate, discussed her efforts to begin a library program involving children and poetry. She is also going to contact Langel's restaurant regarding a "Good Beer, Bad Poetry" event. Lilly will prepare a poem for Veteran's Day and for the Festival of the Trail.

Sculptural Tour of Highland

Cecile and Lance explained the concept of a Sculptural Tour of Highland. Decatur, Indiana has developed a tour over the last several years that has been highly successful in attracting residents and tourists to their downtown. The Redevelopment Commission has pledged to fund the mounting structures for the sculptures. Lance suggested that the first site should be across from Ghandi Medical Center on Highway Avenue west of Kennedy. Currently, a kiosk is located at the site, but it is in disrepair and is difficult to be seen due to the overgrowth of trees and bushes in the area. Members stated that they thought this was a good idea to tie into the proposed Art & Cultural District.

At the present time two possible grants are available for \$500 each through the Northwest Indiana Forum and through Legacy Foundation. Rhiannon Cizon will research other possible grants.

Discussion

Members brought up three possible projects for the future. First, Julie suggested a Sidewalk Poetry Project that utilizes Never Wet by Rustoleum to spray paint poetry that is only visible when it rains. Lilly stated that she will select some poems, possibly from children who participate in the library poetry program. This could be a new feature for the Festival of the Trail.

The second project suggested by Marie would be to bring in chalk artists during the Fourth of July or other downtown event. Marie will research this for next year.

Lastly, Julie suggested developing community vegetable gardens. She will look into the viability of such a project and Rhiannon will look into possible grants. Cecile will check with an Eagle Scout who built raised beds for his Scout project.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 PM.